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ABSTRACT

Papers on parliamentary and legislative libraries presented at the 1982 International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) conference include: (1) "Parliamentary Libraries and Networks," a brief overview by Dermot Englefield (United Kingdom) of the position of legislative libraries in national networks, the extent of legislative library holdings and library publishing activities, and technical and human considerations in the networking of information; (2) "Canadian Parliamentary Libraries in the Network Context," a review by R. Brian Land (Canada) of the Canadian system of government and the historical background, clientele, collections, services, automated systems, network activities, and publications of Canada's federal, provincial, and territorial legislative libraries; and (3) "The Changing Roles of Legislative Libraries" by James C. Pehler (United States), which contrasts the previous activities of legislative reference libraries--drafting of legislation, research on major state issues, and other elements of staff support--with their current role as a central resource using not only a large internal document collection, but also computer systems linked with other libraries in the state and libraries in other state legislatures. (ESR)

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PARLIAMENTARY LIBRARIES
AND
NETWORKS

By

Dermot Englefield

FOR

IFLA PARLIAMENTARY LIBRARIES SECTION MEETING

Montreal, August 1982

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INTRODUCTION

A 'network', thunders the Oxford English Dictionary is 'an interconnected chain or system of immaterial things' and then, in case it sounds too like a quotation from the computer age, the entry adds that the word was first used in this sense by the poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge in his Lay Sermons which were published in 1816. But the words 'interconnected chain or system of immaterial things' do suggest a modern idiom and they are worth examining.

I reflected on this the other day when the European Parliament phoned me to establish the correct number of women in both the House of Commons and the House of Lords at Westminster. The answer was 20 in the House of Commons and 61 in the House of Lords, consisting of 43 life and 18 hereditary peeresses. The information was required for an urgent comparative study of women Parliamentarians in Europe and the system of immaterial impulses on the telephone line connected Westminster and Luxembourg for those few minutes so that we could build a chain of information between us. Is it really true then, I thought that Parliamentary libraries have a role in information networks?

The starting point for examining this question it seems to me is firstly to reflect on the role of Parliament itself. I believe that Parliaments are inherently the centre of a very important network of information. Governments inform Parliament about problems and needs in society and make suggestions, including legislative proposals, to solve them. Members of Parliament are likewise informed by constituents, pressure groups and others about where the shoe pinches, with regard to the problems in society, and these groups also make proposals to solve them. The link in this chain between the Public and its elected Government, is Parliament. In the broad context of its works therefore, I do believe that Parliament and hence its Library is in some degree part of a very real national network of information and indeed to a less extent an international network.

THE POSITION OF PARLIAMENTARY LIBRARIES IN THE NATIONAL NETWORK

Parliamentary libraries have often either been based on or had a relationship with their National Libraries, although in Europe, they were generally established as private legislative libraries at an early date in the history of the Parliament, unless that is, the Parliament already has a very long history as at Westminster. There the House of Commons Library was established in 1818, quite late in the history of the Parliament. The House of Lords Library was established a few years later still.

The classic example of the Legislative Library's having a close relationship with the National Library is that of the Library of Congress. Established as the Library of the Legislature at the very beginning of the 19th century, by the end of that century its growth as the National Library was so great, it had to be moved away from the Capitol to a new neighbouring building. Only in 1914 was a special Department within the Library of Congress established to service the legislature alone, a recognition of its dual role as the Library of the Legislature and National Library, and after 1945 this Department grew into a large Legislative Reference Service and since 1970 into an even larger Congressional Research Service. The National Diet Library in Japan founded after the second world war on the Washington pattern, is organised similarly and the New Zealand Parliamentary Library likewise remains a Department of the National Library. The story has been somewhat different in Canada and in Australia, where since the war both countries have established National Libraries which to some extent grew out of their Parliamentary Libraries which today remain quite independent organisations.

In Europe, on the other hand, the Parliamentary Libraries were mostly founded in the first half of the 19th century at the time when Europe was at its zenith and Parliaments were either given new buildings or older buildings were adapted on a grand scale. For this reason, administratively they have seldom been part of the National Library scene.

If, therefore, the position is that Parliamentary Libraries are mostly administratively independent and are normally not part of a wide National Library network, then this is not really surprising. Most of them exist only to service a small distinctive clientele.

PARLIAMENTARY LIBRARY STOCK AND SERVICES

If we look at the stock they hold and the services they supply, then there is no general rule with regard to Parliamentary libraries. Some have scholarly collections which do not include manuscript material and which are not made available to outsiders. Others hold unique material which is part of the national heritage and which is therefore available to bona fide scholars. Still others have archival responsibility for Parliamentary records and material and this fact also makes them part of the national network of official records. And a few actually play a responsible role vis a vis material and information for Government Departments and other 'outsiders'. In short, with regard to its stock and services, etc., a Parliamentary Library may be in one of three or four categories.

PUBLICATIONS, ETC.

If we turn to Library publications and the role they play in networked information then again we find great differences as between various Parliamentary libraries. In Sweden the Library prepares the Annual Bibliography of Swedish Official Publications and at Westminster the House of Commons Library prepares the Sessional Index of Parliamentary Papers. In these cases the Libraries are clearly playing a network role by spreading this published bibliographical information. Other legislative libraries are preparing material for Members only. Both the Congressional Research Service in Washington and the House of Commons Library, Westminster, make some of their general research for Members available to outsiders. Another aspect of this is the compilation of Information Bulletins on Parliament's work, such as those prepared in Luxembourg or the House of Commons, Westminster. A few Parliamentary Libraries offer a highly organised system of information to the general public on the work of their Parliaments. By doing this they are able to keep the media among others informed of Parliamentary activities and the media will naturally ensure that via broadcasting and the press this information is networked to the whole country and further afield. That, after all, is their job.

TECHNICAL MATTERS

Mention of the media brings up the question of technical equipment, which in recent years has made information compilation and transfer ever easier. When I started to work in the House of Commons there was no telephone in the Library. At the time it was not needed. Today the standard equipment is telephones, telex, viewdata for up to the minute general information on TV screens, terminals to databanks, some of which may be prepared in house and some of which may be external, videotapes, etc. Time and space have been eliminated and Coleridge's definition of a network as 'an interconnected chain or system of immaterial things' has a real contemporary ring about it.

And yet I am not wholly convinced. This is not the whole story even in our technically minded age.

THE HUMAN FACTOR

I started by suggesting that the role of Parliament itself set the scene for the networking of information through its Library. And Parliaments are made up of quite small numbers of overworked man and women of very varied abilities and interests. They need and they get a very personal service from their staff and

especially their Library staff. In terms of expenditure Parliamentary Libraries spend a very high proportion of their total funds on staff. In today's jargon, Parliamentary librarianship is a 'labour intensive service industry'. Because of this very close relationship between Library staff and Members of Parliament, I believe that it is the personal relations between workers in different Parliamentary Libraries that is really the most important network. Once the technique is mastered, it is quite easy via a terminal to consult a database on the other side of the world. But we often have to go farther than this, as the Members of Parliament may well want us to put the bald information in context. This is not just a transfer of information, it is an exchange of culture or values. And that exchange may well need to be done on a person to person basis.

CONCLUSION

I would like to conclude, therefore, by saying a little about these human networks and to suggest that because we are in the specialised field of information for Parliaments, which is an information world relatively small in numbers, most countries make do with one Parliament, we are able to and we need to cooperate closely together. In this respect I think a great deal has been achieved in recent years.

Firstly in these personal networks there is the Parliamentary Libraries Section of IFLA itself, our present forum, which became an independent IFLA Section only a few years ago and which has given us the chance to meet colleagues and to form professional contacts and indeed friendships. It is a fact that it is inevitably the richer countries, those of North America, Europe and countries that were once part of European Empires that normally attend, but two years ago in Manila and I hope that in two years time in Nairobi, there will be more contributors from Asia and from Africa.

Secondly, there is the European Centre for Parliamentary Research and Documentation started in 1977 which is based on the European Parliament at Luxembourg and the Council of Europe at Strasbourg. There are some nineteen European countries who are members and each Parliament has a Correspondent who is the 'contact man' for anyone who needs information from the Parliament. I am the Correspondent for the House of Commons at Westminster and this involves me in about a dozen important enquiries a year - not more. As part of the Centre there is a Working Group of Parliamentary Libraries which meets every 18 months to two years, we last met in Brussels at the end of May 1982, and which encourages the exchange of Parliamentary Library staff as well as the exchange of ideas and information.

Thirdly, there are small regional groups, such as that which includes the Nordic countries in Europe and groups covering only one country like the State Parliaments in Australia, the Provincial Parliaments in Canada and the State legislatures in the United States.

These are the networks of personal cooperation which are, I believe, very important to us all and I would like to hear from you any ideas you may have to help make them more effective. In the last ten years we have come a long way, but it is only through building on these 'interconnected chains' that we will be able to make real use of the miracles of technology which are being increasingly offered us and which we need to support out work for Members of Parliament, who are themselves caught up in the growing tempo of change.

DERMOT ENGLEFIELD



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Parliamentary Libraries Section.

Canadian Parliamentary Libraries

in the Network Context

by

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Constitutional Background

Canada is a federal state established in 1867 by an Act of the British Parliament which gave the new nation complete internal self-government. Over the years, Canada gradually acquired from Britain full control over its own external affairs as well. On April 17, 1982, Canada became a fully sovereign state when Queen Elizabeth signed the Canada Act, which transferred the power to amend the Canadian constitution from the British to the Canadian Parliament, thereby removing the last vestige of Canada's former colonial status.

The Constitution Act, 1867, and its amendments over the years, important as they are, provide only the general framework of government.¹

These Acts are augmented by judicial interpretations, by various Acts of the federal Parliament and of the provincial legislatures and, most of all, by custom and convention. Canada has inherited and adapted the usages and understandings of the British parliamentary system to suit its own form of parliamentary democracy.

1.2 Division of Powers

Under the Constitution Act, 1867, the federal Parliament was given power to "make laws for the peace, order and good government of Canada in relation to all matters...not...assigned exclusively to the Legislatures of the provinces."² The Act added a list of examples of this general power, which includes: defence, raising money by any kind of taxation; regulation of trade and commerce; navigation and shipping; fisheries;

currency and banking; bankruptcy and insolvency; interest; patents and copyrights; marriage and divorce; criminal law and criminal procedure; penitentiaries; interprovincial and international steamships, ferries, railways, canals and telegraphs; and any "works" declared by Parliament to be "for the general advantage of Canada". Amendments have added unemployment insurance and amendment of the Constitution, except in regard to the division of powers between Parliament and the provincial legislatures, the rights guaranteed to the English and French languages, the constitutional rights of certain religious denominations in education, the requirements of an annual session of Parliament and the maximum duration of Parliament.

The Act of 1867 gave Parliament and the provincial legislatures concurrent power over agriculture and immigration, with the federal law prevailing over the provincial in case of conflict. Amendments have since provided for concurrent jurisdiction over pensions, but with provincial law prevailing in case of conflict. The Act of 1867 also established a limited official bilingualism. In debates in both Houses of Parliament members may use either English or French, the records and journals of both Houses must be kept in both languages, Acts of Parliament must be published in both languages and either language may be used in any pleading or process in courts set up by Parliament; the same provisions were made for the legislature and courts of Quebec. In 1969 Parliament adopted the Official Languages Act, which declares that English and French enjoy equal status and are the official languages of Canada for all purposes of the Parliament and Government of Canada.

The Constitution Act, 1982, included a Charter of Rights and Freedoms. This charter entrenches in the Constitution fundamental democratic rights and freedoms, including mobility rights, legal rights, non-discrimination rights and language of education rights, so that they cannot be changed by the federal Parliament or by any provincial legislature acting alone.

Each provincial legislature has exclusive power over: the amendment of the provincial Constitution (except as regards the office of Lieutenant Governor, the legal head of the provincial executive); natural resources; direct taxation for provincial purposes; prisons; hospitals; asylums and charities; municipal institutions; licences for provincial or municipal revenue; local works and undertakings; incorporation of provincial companies, solemnization of marriage; property and civil rights; administration of justice (including the establishment of civil and criminal courts and civil procedure); matters of a merely local or private nature; and education, subject to certain safeguards for denominational schools in Newfoundland and Protestant or Roman Catholic schools in the other provinces. Judicial decisions have given "property and civil rights" a very wide scope, including most labour legislation and much of social security. ³

1.3 The Canadian Confederation

The Parliament of Canada is bicameral and consists of a House of Commons of 282 elected Members and a Senate of 104 Senators appointed by the Governor General on the advice of the Prime Minister. Each of the ten provinces has an elected legislature but none has an upper house.

In addition, northern Canada is divided into the Yukon Territory and the Northwest Territories, each of which comes directly under the Government and Parliament of Canada. Each of the territories is administered by a commissioner appointed by the federal government and by an elected Council.

2. PARLIAMENTARY LIBRARIES

2.1 Historical Background

In addition to the Library of Parliament in Ottawa, which serves federal parliamentarians, each of the ten provinces and two territories provides library and information services for legislators. One of the features common to most parliamentary or legislative libraries in Canada is that they are the oldest or among the oldest libraries in their respective provinces. ⁴ For example, legislative libraries were established in Prince Edward Island in 1773 ⁵, in New Brunswick in 1784, ⁶ and in Upper Canada (Ontario) and in Lower Canada (Quebec) in 1791 and 1792 respectively. ⁷

The Library of Parliament and the legislative libraries of British Columbia, Manitoba, New Brunswick and Quebec operate under their own special legislative acts. With the exception of Newfoundland, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, all parliamentary libraries publish annual reports either separately or as part of the report of the particular ministry to which they are administratively responsible.

2.2 Clientele

Canadian parliamentary libraries were established for the benefit of their respective parliaments but, to some extent, they also serve government departments and, to a lesser extent, students and members of the general public. The degree of accessibility to the collection varies from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. Some, like the Library of Parliament, restrict use to Members of Parliament and Senators, Members of the Parliamentary Press Gallery, judges and certain senior civil servants. With the permission of the Parliamentary Librarian, however, scholars and academics may be permitted access to the collection. In general, the degree of public access to and extent of borrowing privileges in legislative libraries are governed by local practice, taking into account the availability of other library collections in the vicinity and their accessibility to the general public.

2.3 Collections

Emphasis in collection development is given to parliamentary procedure and history, law, politics and government, public policy and public administration, public finance and economics, and Canadian history — national, provincial and local. Most Canadian parliamentary libraries are depository libraries for federal as well as provincial government publications. Most also collect to some extent government publications from the United States, Britain, Australia and New Zealand. Both the Library of Parliament and the library of Assemblée nationale du Québec also collect a substantial number of government publications from France. Publications of the United Nations and its agencies and other intergovernmental and non-governmental

international organizations are generally collected on a selective basis.

Acquisition of microform materials and, in particular, microfiche is on the increase generally as more and more government publications, reports and serials become available in this format. Because microform requires less storage space, it is attractive to parliamentary libraries, all of which are short of space.

Typically, Canadian legislative libraries have particularly strong collections of daily and weekly newspapers published in their respective provinces. The Ontario Legislative Library, for example, subscribes to approximately 45 daily and 200 weekly newspapers published in that province.

2.4 Library Services

Parliamentary libraries provide information and reference services and, in some cases, research services to members of their respective parliaments. They do this by selecting, acquiring, cataloguing and servicing books, periodicals, newspapers, government publications, reports, microforms and other materials in order to enable the members to carry out their legislative responsibilities in the most effective and efficient manner.

In addition to carrying out information and reference services common to other types of libraries, most parliamentary libraries provide newspaper clipping services for their clientele. The Library of Parliament produces Quorum, a booklet of selected press clippings which is issued daily while Parliament is in session. Similarly, the library of L'Assemblée nationale du Québec produces L'Argus, a booklet of selected press clippings issued daily while the Assembly is in session. The British Columbia Legislative

Library indexes news items in four provincial daily newspapers, and the Saskatchewan Legislative Library also indexes four provincial daily papers, as well as two other publications. The Ontario Legislative Library operates a press clipping service which daily circulates clippings on scores of topics to members who have requested the service. The Alberta Legislature Library also provides a press clipping service.

Since public affairs is one of the prime concerns for parliamentary libraries, most maintain vertical files or current data files, arranged by subject. These files consist of newspaper clippings, pamphlets, speeches, and articles. These files are especially useful for a quick up-date or chronological summary of particular issues or events, as well as for providing information about individuals or institutions.

Several parliamentary libraries periodically distribute current awareness publications such as lists of titles of new publications and lists of current periodical articles of particular interest, but none as yet operates an automated selective dissemination of information system for its clientele.

2.5 Research Services

One of the most interesting developments in Canadian parliamentary libraries in recent years has been the provision of special research services to members and committees. Whereas reference librarians provide information, bibliographies, copies of printed materials and other traditional services for legislators, the research officers analyse, synthesize and summarize the available data on a given subject and prepare reports. Broadly speaking, the reference librarian locates and transfers information in the form in which it is found while the research officer digests and reshapes

the material into the form most useful to the legislator.

Research services in Canadian parliamentary libraries began in 1965 when the Library of Parliament established its Research Branch. Research services were established by Quebec in 1972, by Ontario in 1979, and by Alberta in 1981. In general, research officers provide on request notes, papers and oral briefings for members, committees and parliamentary delegations. The research services of the Library of Parliament and the Ontario Legislative Library also provide background papers and current issue reviews for general distribution to members.

2.6 Bibliographies of Government Publications

Six of the ten provincial legislative libraries in Canada are responsible for producing current bibliographies of the publications of their respective governments. At present, the legislative libraries of British Columbia, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Ontario and Saskatchewan issue periodic checklists of government publications. In 1982, the British Columbia Legislative Library began producing its Monthly Checklist by means of a computer. The computer program provides for monthly indexes and complete annual cumulations of both the bibliography and the index. Ontario plans to produce its Monthly Checklist by computer beginning in 1983.

2.7 Cataloguing in Publication

Three provincial legislative libraries are participating in the Cataloguing in Publication (CIP) program administered by the National Library of Canada. In 1979, the British Columbia Legislative Library became the first legislative library to participate in CIP and to provide cataloguing data for publications issued by the government of the province.

APLIC has held biennial conferences with the next one scheduled for October 1982 in Toronto.

The objectives of APLIC are to improve parliamentary library service in Canada; to foster communications among members concerning matters of mutual interest; to identify issues, points of view and areas requiring research; to improve relations with parliamentary information and research officers and all other parliamentary officers; and to foster cooperation with associations having related interests.

3.2 Associations of Government Libraries

In addition to membership in the Association of Parliamentary Librarians in Canada, some parliamentary libraries meet periodically with other government libraries within their respective jurisdictions to discuss matters of mutual interest. The Library of Parliament is a member of the Council of Federal Libraries, a group consisting of federally supported government libraries. The Alberta Legislature Library belongs to the Alberta Government Libraries Network; the British Columbia Legislative Library belongs to the B.C. Government Libraries Association; and the Ontario Legislative Library is a member of the Ontario Government Librarians' Council.

4. THE FUTURE OF PARLIAMENTARY LIBRARIES IN CANADA

In future, it is likely that legislative libraries will play a more important role than in the past, particularly as provincial governments recognize the need for better support services for their legislators. Since 1976, three legislative libraries - Ontario, New Brunswick and Saskatchewan - have been the object of special studies with a view to

FOOTNOTES

1. Schedule I of the Constitution Act, 1982, proclaimed April 17, 1982, renames the British North America Act, 1867, the Constitution Act, 1867.
2. Section 91, The Constitution Act, 1867.
3. Section 92, The Constitution Act, 1867.
4. For convenience, this paper uses "parliamentary libraries" as the generic term to include both provincial legislative libraries and the federal Library of Parliament.
5. Jean C. Gill, "The Legislative and Public Library at Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island", Maritime Library Institute, Bulletin 3 (May/June 1938): 6.
6. New Brunswick, Legislature, Joint Committee on the Legislative Library (Report), New Brunswick, Legislative Assembly, Journals, 1864, p.248.
7. "Libraries of Canada: History of Canadian Libraries", Canada, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, Annual Survey of Education in Canada, 1928. (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1930), p. 158.
8. Erik J. Spicer, Zora Zink, and Anthony Wright. The Ontario Legislative Library: Present Problems and Future Potential. Ottawa: 1977. Published as Appendix B of the Final Report of the Select Committee on the Fourth and Fifth Reports of the Ontario Commission on the Legislature. Toronto: The Legislative Assembly of Ontario, 1977.

Zora Zink. The Legislative Library of New Brunswick: Its Problems and Potential. In consultation with Erik J. Spicer. Ottawa, 1977.

Saskatchewan, Legislative Assembly, Special Committee on the Review of the Legislative Library, Report. Regina, 1981.

Appendix I

Parliamentary Libraries in Canada:

Dates of Establishment

<u>Date of Establishment</u>	<u>Jurisdiction</u>	<u>Jurisdiction</u>	<u>Date of Establishment</u>
1773	Prince Edward Island	Canada	1867 (Province of Canada -1841)
1784	New Brunswick	Alberta	1906
1791	Upper Canada (Ontario -1867)	British Columbia	1894
1792	Lower Canada (Quebec -1867)	Manitoba	1870
1836	Newfoundland	New Brunswick	1784
1841	Province of Canada (Canada -1867)	Newfoundland	1836
1862	Nova Scotia	Nova Scotia	1862
1870	Manitoba	Ontario	1867 (Upper Canada -1791)
1894	British Columbia	Prince Edward Island	1773
1905	Saskatchewan	Quebec	1867 (Lower Canada -1792)
1906	Alberta	Saskatchewan	1905

Appendix V

Parliamentary Libraries in Canada:

Number of Current Periodical and Newspaper Titles, 1982.

<u>Jurisdiction</u>	<u>Number of Periodical Titles</u>	<u>Number of Newspaper Titles</u>
Canada	2,860	642
Alberta	466	135
British Columbia	1,055	268
Manitoba	446	157
New Brunswick	550	46
Newfoundland	N/A	N/A
Nova Scotia	350*	--
Ontario	702	293
Prince Edward Island	200*	--
Quebec	1,164	303
Saskatchewan	610*	--

* Includes newspaper titles

N/A = not available



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Section: Parliamentary Libraries

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204-RE

The Changing Roles of Legislative Libraries

by

James C. PEHLER
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USA

meeting
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THE CHANGING ROLES OF LEGISLATIVE LIBRARIES

by

James C. Pehler
State Senator, Minnesota

and
Chairman
Legislative Information Needs Committee
National Conference of State Legislatures

This paper describes the previous roles of legislative reference libraries as involving the drafting of legislation, researching major state issues, and other elements of staff support. The current role is much more that of a central resource person using not only a large internal document collection, but also computer systems linked with other libraries in the state and libraries in other state legislatures. The roles of the legislative libraries are likely to continue to change bringing about more services to members and staff, more internal computer systems, and more statewide library networks.

In 1978 former U.S. Congressman Lucien Nedzi, then Chairman of the Congressional Joint Committee on the Library, spoke to the Annual Meeting of the National Conference of State Legislatures and reminisced about his prior service in the Michigan legislature. He mentioned his office, which consisted of his desk on the floor of the Michigan House of Representatives, and the "large" staff that was available to the House members--a few bill drafters, even fewer secretaries, and a legislative librarian. The total staff available to the members of the Michigan House back in those days--the 1950s and early 1960s--amounted to a few harried individuals.

Nedzi himself drew the stark contrast between that legislative world of only a few years back, and the legislative environment today. The hours for the state legislator are longer and filled with far more legislative business, because more and more legislators find it necessary to relegate other careers to the background

when they serve. For many legislators, the office space has improved substantially--although not all legislators have separate, well-appointed office facilities. However, perhaps one of the greatest changes in the past two decades of legislative growth and change has been in the number and qualifications of staff members who now aid the legislators.

I do not want to suggest that all of the changes that have been made in legislative life have been positive and supportive of state legislative institutions. There was a substantial number of strong characteristics about the legislatures in times past. However, one of the changes that has been a positive factor in U.S. state legislative life has been the strengthening of the numbers and capabilities of the legislative libraries. Today, those libraries have become more integral parts of the legislatures than ever before and the range of services they provide means that the legislator has almost no excuse for saying, "I didn't have enough information on that topic." Indeed, the role of contemporary legislative librarians has become more the role of the information manager--a role that involves sorting out useful information, packaging it in a convenient, concise form, and delivering it to the legislator in a timely manner. The role has generally shifted from the relentless information miner to the careful information sorter.

LEGISLATIVE LIBRARIES--THEN

Only a few decades ago, legislative librarians were busy people. The usually lone individual in the legislative reference library spent a substantial amount of time clipping news articles from state papers. Then they sorted and filed those

newsclips, providing what was often the only statewide clipping file outside the state library. In fact, many of the legislative librarians were employees of the state library rather than the legislature itself. The job then often involved finding out when was the last time the legislature had honored the Caddo Gap High School Marching Band. (Such a task was and still is an important feature of legislative service for the librarians.)

The legislative librarians in those not too distant days (I am still referring to only 15 or 20 years ago) also provided a substantial amount of bill drafting assistance to both legislators and other legislative staff members. Frequently, they had the only central collection of bills that had been introduced in previous sessions, and frequently their memories were the best single indexing and cataloging device at their disposal. The search and retrieval system was often a printed list of previously introduced bills. Nonetheless, they had those bills and were able to get them and use them for drafting new bills in subsequent legislative sessions.

Then there was issue research. Apart from the bill drafting staff, the legislative librarians frequently were the research staff the legislatures. Occasionally, legislators had a few interns and shared services of a few other central or partisan staff members. But the legislative reference librarians were often responsible for providing the only bibliographic, analytic research that was available to the legislator on a given topic.

So the services performed for the legislators were relatively few in number and the resources used by the legislative reference librarian were relatively few in number and usually resided within a short walk from the front desk.

LEGISLATIVE LIBRARIES--NOW

I do not want to over-extend the contrast that I am about to make. Many state legislatures still have modest reference library operations, and I am not sure there is any adequate substitute for the librarian who can remember the last honor paid to the Caddo Gap High School Marching Band. But times have changed for the legislative librarians. Their numbers have grown larger, their responsibilities have become more complex, and their resources have multiplied dramatically. I suspect that all of this has occurred without a relative increase in their shares of the legislatures' operating budgets.

Legislative librarians still maintain newsclipping files. In some states like Minnesota, the legislative reference library probably still has the most complete and accessible statewide newsclipping file in existence. These clipping files are still the information lifeblood for legislators, because what the press says is important and bears a great deal of influence on what the public knows about our work. Just coincidentally, of course, what those newspaper say also can affect our election campaigns. So we still need to know what they say, and we still occasionally need to know what said on some subject a few years back.

Legislative librarians still provide bill drafting assistance. They probably do not draft as many bills as they used to, but bill drafters still turn to them frequently for assistance in finding out what bills have been introduced on a particular subject in previous sessions. Bill drafters are more frequently turning to them for aid in finding out what bills have been introduced on a particular

subject in other states, but I will save my comments on this topic for a later section of this paper.

Legislative librarians now find themselves performing an even wider role in informing the public about legislative actions. From the errant phone call of a citizen who wants to know what happened to a particular bill in the 1976 session to the high school or college student who has waited a bit late for a term paper, the legislative librarians find themselves serving a client base that extends far beyond the list of legislators and their staffs. As the demand for open and accessible government continues to grow in the United States, the importance of this function is also likely to grow.

Then there is still issue research. It is here that the greatest growth has been and will likely to be in the foreseeable future. While legislators are ultimately responsible to the constituents in their districts, they increasingly realize that many issues reach well beyond the boundaries of their districts. With greater frequency, the legislators are asking how other states have approached a particular problem. They ask this question not on the assumption that the right solution to a problem in one state is the right solution in another state, but in the belief that it rarely hurts to know how another state has addressed a problem. Of course, it is just possible that the policy adopted by another state has been a terrible blunder. But it is always useful to know of someone else's mistakes in some issue area before you pass a law institutionalizing that same mistake.

Legislators and their staffs are increasingly turning to their legislative libraries for this kind of interstate policy and issue information. The libraries initially relied on their contacts with colleagues in other states for this

information. and many of them still use the "old librarians network" very effectively in their information services. However, many legislative libraries have equipped themselves with new weapons in their information wars, and I want to acquaint you some some of these newer, more sophisticated information armaments.

When a legislator hands an envelope to a staffer with a message scribbled on the back to find out if any states have devised new ways to fund the operations of the state park system, and the staffer turns this problem over to the legislative library, 49 phone calls are usually out of the question. A nearby computer terminal, however, might give that librarian the opportunity to dial into any one of a number of commercial data bases tha might contain just the information they need.

One data base that is widely used is the NEW YORK TIMES INFOBANK. This source is particularly good for information on but activities, general economic trends, and science policies. However, given the scope of coverage in this data base, which relies very heavily on the New York Times, the INFOBANK has a limited use for finding out about laws passed by legislatures and regulations adopted by state agencies outside New York.

Some state legislative libraries have access to the Lockheed DIALOG system, the System Development Corporation ORBIT system, or the BRS data base. All three systems are frequently useful for getting general, background information on a particular issue. Like the NEW YORK TIMES INFOBANK, their strengths appear to be in general economic and scientific areas. They are all relatively less useful for finding very recent information on state legislative actions and policy issues.

Several state legislative libraries use the LEXIS and NEXIS systems produced by the Mead Data Corporation. Studies by the National Conference of State Legislatures indicate that the Ohio Legislative Service Commission makes the most extensive use of the LEXIS/NEXIS systems among the legislative library users. Largely because of this extensive use, the legislative research reports prepared by that agency routinely contain the greatest amount of case law research, the mainstay of the LEXIS system, of any legislative research documents in the country.

Of course, the high costs of systems use keeps legislative activity on these systems to a minimum. Costs of \$140 per connect hour are simply prohibitive in many states and would quickly consume the entire data processing/information retrieval budgets of many legislative libraries in only a few hours. So in order to get timely and accurate information on a wide variety of topics, the legislative libraries have turned in increasing numbers to alternative information systems.

COMPUTERIZED LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Before I turn my attention to interstate networks, I want to look briefly at in-state legislative information systems. Three legislative libraries have made tremendous strides recently in providing computerized catalogs for their holdings. Texas, Oregon, and Maryland have independently developed their own systems to catalog, store, and retrieve information on bills and thousands of other "fugitive documents" that make their way into the libraries. While these library information

systems are not spectacular when compared with the tremendously powerful systems used by the Library of Congress, they are particularly noteworthy for two reasons. First, they were created by highly trained librarians--not by data processing professionals. To use the Oregon example, a skilled legislative librarian who had a minimum amount of training in computers created that legislative library's own catalog system using the IBM STAIRS system. The STAIRS system had its most notable use in Oregon and approximately 15 other states as a computer system for storing and searching the state statutory data base. But this highly innovative use of the STAIRS system came when a legislative librarian asked the legislative data processing department "How hard would it be for me to use your computer to keep a list of my library documents?" A few months later, the librarian could produce a list of currently held documents on any key topic for any legislative staff member or legislator on demand.

The second reason that these in-house legislative library systems are noteworthy is their cost. We find no herd of data processing professionals entering esoteric code; we find no large-scale equipment acquisition; we find no hard-to-maintain programs. These systems were developed at a very small incremental cost--the work of the librarians and a little bit of crucial assistance from legislative data processors. As states find their budgets increasingly squeezed by the weakening U.S. economy, this kind of ingenuity and cost-saving productivity gain will be crucial if legislative libraries are going to continue to deliver the kinds of services expected of them by legislators and staff.

In Minnesota, our legislative library is joining with a number of university libraries to create a statewide library network. When this on-line system is complete, any of the participating libraries in the state will be able to have

access to the holdings of the other libraries. This system will greatly speed the sharing of information in the state, because it will allow our legislative library to have access to many of the very useful documents in the university libraries, particularly faculty papers and other research reports that might be less widely disseminated. In return, the other participating libraries will be able to have access to the many government documents that go into our legislative library, which serves as a depository of state documents. This turn to a statewide, on-line system will greatly strengthen our legislative library's ability to find that esoteric study of electric power plant siting requirements that could make a tremendous difference to the constituents in our districts. More importantly, the libraries will be able to find it quickly and with a minimum of labor.

THE NCSL LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION SYSTEM

Increasingly, legislators are asking questions that begin "Which other states have a law to...?" A few years ago, the only way to find out was through a 50-state search of the statutes--a time-consuming, costly undertaking. While we still have not arrived at the time when all 50 state statutory codes are on-line in a central computer system (such a system would cost at least \$7,000,000 to create and several million dollars more to maintain each year!), we have created a system that provides answers to our questions. Through our membership in the National Conference of State Legislatures, we have pooled the resources of the states to create a multi-state Legislative Information System (LIS). Through participation in the LIS, a state legislature can send in its research reports and selected research memoranda to the NCSL headquarters in Denver, Colorado. Staff members in that central office abstract and index the documents and enter the abstracts into

its computer.

When a legislator or staff member wants to know which states have a particular type of program or a certain type of law on the books, the legislative librarians can frequently find a study on that topic previously completed in another state. Of course, such a discovery can save a tremendous amount of time and prevent a costly duplication of effort.

This LIS has now grown to contain numerous other documents in addition to its state legislative research collection: U.S. Congressional staff studies, state executive agency reports, federal executive agency reports, various state government periodicals, and even some statutes. Limited funding will prohibit this system from expanding its holding of these other documents greatly, but as the collection grows over time, it should prove to be an even greater central resource for legislative libraries than it is now. Thirty-three states have direct, dial-up access to this computer system, and all states routinely receive documents from the system by calling the offices of the National Conference of State Legislatures and requesting research assistance. As a legislative staff group, legislative librarians are by far the most active on-line users.

From a state perspective, this use of a central system has made a great deal of sense. The cost is right--we support the system through our membership appropriations into the National Conference and we pay no direct charges for using the system. The time delivery is right--if the system has a document on a topic of interest, we get it within two or three days. The timeliness of the research is right--over half the documents in the system are dated after 1980.

A LOOK TO THE FUTURE FOR LEGISLATIVE LIBRARIES

Looking to the future of any organization is an inherently risky undertaking. However, by looking at the recent trends in the development of legislative libraries, I believe we can make a few projections about how those organizations are likely to shape themselves in the coming years.

First, the trend toward a broader range of services provided by legislative libraries is likely to continue. Legislative staffs are not growing in size at the rates shown in the late 1960s and 1970s. Existing staffs--including the libraries--are going to be called upon to do more with existing resources. Doing more means not just doing more of what they already do, but doing more by taking on new activities. Some of the new activities might include providing more central fiscal information resources, more information on the histories of previously introduced legislation, and more direct services to legislative committees.

Second, the trend toward computerizing the in-house holdings of legislative libraries is almost certainly going to grow. As the cost of computers and computing capacity continues to drop, relative to other costs, and as more legislative librarians are trained to use a variety of computers, they will simply take it upon themselves to develop their own systems. As users of information processing, they know what they need in the way of systems capabilities. When they know how to program their own systems, whether it is on a personal microcomputer or on the state central computer, more of them will develop their own information base capabilities.

Third, depending upon their ability to justify the costs to legislatures, the legislative libraries will increasingly join with other libraries in the states to form more statewide catalog systems and library networks. While the systems development cost can seem high at the start, the eventual gain in information distribution can be even higher. While the legislatures are not going to look favorably at just any scheme that comes down the road, they are probably going to be willing to fund the well-designed, sensible systems. While the current weak economy might slow these efforts, a change in the economy will mean a growth in these statewide systems.

Fourth, legislative libraries will increasingly use a computer terminal to take them outside the boundaries of their respective states. As the NCSL system grows and as other data bases add information that will be useful in the legislatures, the legislative libraries will show a stronger trend to make use of these nationwide systems. While the cost of using these systems is not likely to decline, the real cost of not having access to the useful information in the systems will become prohibitive. No legislature can afford to be information poor--or to have too much unsorted, useless information.

Even now, most legislative libraries bear faint resemblance to the libraries that Congressman Nedzi remembered only a few years ago. To the degree that changes continue to occur in the functions they perform for members and other staff, in the in-house computer resources that they develop, in the in-state networks that they cultivate, and in the nationwide research information systems that they use, the legislative libraries of the future will be as different for us in ten years

as they are now for legislators who served only a couple of decades ago.